Declassified in Part - Sanitized Copy Approved for Release @ 50-Yr2013/04/29 : CIA-RDP82-00047R000100070007-5

SECRET CONTROL

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

REPORT NO. [ ] 50X1

CD NO.

COUNTRY Czechoslovakia

DATE DISTR. 26 Sep 51

SUBJECT Reaction to Foreign Broadcasts

NO. OF PAGES 5

PLACE ACQUIRED [ ]

NO. OF ENCLS. (LISTED BELOW) 50X1

DATE ACQUIRED BY SOURCE [ ]

SUPPLEMENT TO REPORT NO. 50X1

DATE OF INFORMATION [ ]

50X1

THIS DOCUMENT CONTAINS INFORMATION AFFECTING THE NATIONAL DEFENSE OF THE UNITED STATES, WITHIN THE MEANING OF TITLE 18, SECTIONS 793 AND 794, OF THE U.S. CODE, AS AMENDED. ITS TRANSMISSION OR REVELATION OF ITS CONTENTS TO OR RECEIPT BY AN UNAUTHORIZED PERSON IS PROHIBITED BY LAW. THE REPRODUCTION OF THIS FORM IS PROHIBITED.

THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION

SOURCE

1. Foreign broadcasts heard in Prague in order of the quality of reception are:

   (a) Radio Diffusion Francaise (RDF) on short wave lengths--Best reception without interference.

   (b) British Broadcasting Co. (BBC)--Slightly worse reception than RDF on both medium and short wave lengths.

   (c) Voice of America (VOA)--On the whole, poor. There is no reception on medium wave lengths, as the boradcasts are strongly jammed. Reception is slightly better on wave lengths of 49 and 50 meters.

   (d) Radio Free Europe (RFE)--Cannot be heard in Prague on medium wave lengths because of simultaneous broadcast (presumably from Prague) of two programs, usually lectures and sometimes music. The result is a medley of voices which effectively jams the RFE broadcast. Reception is better on short wave for the 1730-1800 program and, I understand, for the late evening and night programs.

2. The most listened to broadcasts (Prague time) are:

   (a) VOA--1830-1900 and 2100-2130.
   (b) RFE--1730-1800, 1930 (?) and 2300 (?).
   (c) BBC--1400-1415 and 2130-2200.
   (d) RDF--2000-2100.

3. Listeners' preference for newscasts broadcast by the stations is as follows:

   (a) RDF--RDF's handling of straight news is very much appreciated because almost every item is followed by a short and very apt commentary explaining the event reported. The newscast is clear and informative and includes all the news of the day, rather than simply the latest news (listeners do not always have time to listen to every newscast and they appreciate the completeness of the RDF summary). The news items are thus not always the latest and may even be slightly late, but listeners would rather

CLASSIFICATION SECRET SECRET

STATE	EV	X	NAVY	X	DISTRIBUTION
ARMY		X	AIR	X	

NO. 1961 51-4D

(20)

Declassified in Part - Sanitized Copy Approved for Release @ 50-Yr2013/04/29 : CIA-RDP82-00047R000100070007-5

Declassified in Part - Sanitized Copy Approved for Release @ 50-Yr2013/04/29 : CIA-RDP82-00047R000100070007-5

sacrifice timeliness than completeness. The time of the broadcast is also appreciated. The RDF newscast is perhaps the most sought after.

(b) VOA--VOA newscasts are considered the most alert and its sources the best informed. However, the practice of reporting an item only once during the broadcast and then without commentary rouses some suspicion among these people whom the present state of affairs in Czechoslovakia have taught to be distrustful. Also, the broadcast has no unity and does not run smoothly. The newscast, for example, is interrupted in the middle by a talk that is sometimes uninteresting. The idea probably is to "tie" the listener to his radio during the talk, but it is not necessary to force Czechoslovaks to remain listening if the forthcoming talk is interesting. The interruption of the newscast is unpopular among the listeners who wait impatiently for the news.

(c) BBC--Czechs regard BBC's London broadcasts as the most trustworthy, but the presentation of news is felt to be a little too dry and matter-of-fact.

(d) RFE--The very existence of this station has a strong and positive influence on the Czechoslovaks. It is hoped (perhaps too optimistically) that deficiencies in reception will eventually be overcome. It is not possible to judge the quality of RFE's five-minute newscast heard in Prague on short wave lengths. Perhaps it would be possible to judge the quality of RFE's five-minute newscast heard in Prague on short wave lengths. Perhaps it would be possible to devote more time to news, if possible in the 1730 transmission. I have heard, however, that individuals in the country in western Bohemia have been able to tune in on the station to some extent and I have also heard praise of the Voice of Free Czechoslovakia Broadcasts. Czech propagandists very likely will soon take note of the fact that the Sudetenlanders ("Lodgman and Co") have a very negative attitude toward the station. The very fact that the Sudetens are to share the broadcasts would be a welcome item for the Prague propagandists. This would be especially true if the anti-Communist stations should mention the Czech Communist regime's preparations to recall (after Soviet pressure) Sudetens of the so-called democratic type. In general, all the western stations present their news on happenings inside Czechoslovakia after long delays. Such reports, whether concerned with economic changes, personal changes, arrests, accidents or murder, are usually based on some actual event. The Czech citizen learns hardly anything from the Czech radio or press and what he does learn is distorted; so that he depends upon word-of-mouth transmission until he can hear the true story in a foreign broadcast. The following incident is an example. On 1 Jul 51 the Czechoslovak Government introduced some far-reaching economic measures, including a tremendous increase in prices on the free market. The Czech press and radio gave no detailed account of this boosting of prices. The silence was made all the more conspicuous by the preceding oft-repeated speeches by Ministers Krajcir, Jankovcova and Premier Zapotocky, all dealing with the lowering of prices on the free market. The newspapers meanwhile were publishing long lists of the new prices and extolling the rising living standard of the working people. To my knowledge, no foreign broadcasting station had, up to 6 Jul 51, given a worthy account of this obvious duplicity on the part of the Communist regime. Perhaps an account was given subsequent to 6 Jul 51; but it would have lost the desired propaganda effect, since the people affected would already have become used to the new situation.

4. Prague listeners' preferences for foreign political commentaries are as follows:

(a) VOA--VOA's Sunday 2100 talks are awaited most impatiently. Prague listeners believe their author is Ivo Duchacek. These talks are lively interesting and nearly always up-to-date, as they are concerned with everyday political and Czech domestic problems. They show that their author is acquainted with the needs of the Czech listeners. Of the commentators on all the mentioned stations, this one on VOA in his weekly talks most nearly penetrates the mentality of the Czech listener. Czech intellectuals and also working class listeners would welcome talks by Messrs Heidrich, Papanek, Osusky, (if he is in the US), Drabek, Hrebik, Lettrich and Provaznikova. These are personalities whom most Czech believe

Declassified in Part - Sanitized Copy Approved for Release @ 50-Yr2013/04/29 : CIA-RDP82-00047R000100070007-5

Declassified in Part - Sanitized Copy Approved for Release @ 50-Yr2013/04/29 : CIA-RDP82-00047R000100070007-5

not to be involved in the political struggles known to be taking place within the Council of Free Czechoslovakia; and, more important, they were not involved in inter-party struggles in Czechoslovakia. It is well known in Prague that all is not well in the Council of Free Czechoslovakia since otherwise the Council would be asserting itself positively in some way. One does not hear of this organization in Czechoslovakia except in connection with some party-political struggles. The Czech people should be told something of the Council's activities by politicians not bearing the conspicious stigma of parties which were in power at the time of the 1948 coup. Czechs expect to have these matters explained by the VOA since they believe these events take place in the US. Broadcasts by politicians who were in power until the coup (unless they have since cleared themselves of guilt) and about whom unflattering reports are being spread, are not received with enthusiasm. It is true that mistakes were made in 1938, before the Germans came in, but Czech politicians of those times had in the years 1939-45 a certain political and moral prestige at home. But in February 1948 a number of Czech politicians lost, probably forever, this political and moral prestige, apparently unknowingly and without wanting to know they had lost it. Statistics used in accounts of the buying power of the US dollar as opposed to that of the Czech crown are very effective. Also very effective are broadcasts giving the names of guards in Labor Camps, members of the frontier guards, agents, police informants and over-eager CP members guilty of crimes against humanity.

(b) BBC--Increasingly popular are talks presented in beautiful diction and pleasant voice by an announcer introduced as Karel Brusak. His comments on the Communist underestimation of the meaning of certain terms, words and human ideals are excellent. Other lectures are likewise well chosen. The weekly talks given by Sir Robert Bruce Lockhart are, however, a chapter in themselves. As a result of his sincere friendship and love for the Czechoslovak nation, his close relationship with Dr Benes and Jan Masaryk, and his books, Sir Robert enjoys in Czechoslovakia an excellent reputation and is held in high esteem by all classes. This esteem represents a tremendous moral capital which should yield considerable dividends but which is being wasted to such an extent that his audience is getting smaller. Sir Robert's comments are accepted under all circumstances with due seriousness. When he spoke in an optimistic vein, his listeners became so enthusiastic that he had himself to caution and quieten them in another speech. Now he has gone to the other extreme and has become extremely pessimistic; the contents, moreover, are so poor, empty and irrelevant that even the most faithful of his audience become depressed. Also, when he comments on articles published in the daily press, he does not usually choose those deserving comment or explanation. Instead, his analyses are most usually devoted to articles and speeches which the person of average intelligence can analyze for himself. I should like to see the following changes made in Sir Robert's present ations:

(1) Czechoslovaks know that Sir Robert has many things to say; he could not be influenced by the not always correct political instructions of his superiors or advisers who determine the basic line of his talks.

(2) His broadcasts should not resemble the Sunday sermons of a priest (the German "Gesalbt" describes this very well).

(3) When Sir Robert closes, he should not threaten his audience with what may be in store for it. Unhappily, everybody is only too aware of that. Instead of saying "be strong in your hope and goodnight" he should end on an encouraging note, saying something like, "we are standing by you, we have not forsaken you, we are working for you, stay assured that you will again be a nation of free people".

Declassified in Part - Sanitized Copy Approved for Release @ 50-Yr2013/04/29 : CIA-RDP82-00047R000100070007-5

Declassified in Part - Sanitized Copy Approved for Release @ 50-Yr2013/04/29 : CIA-RDP82-00047R000100070007-5

(c) RDF--The nostalgic "Calendar of Czech-French Friendship" finds little response among Czech listeners. It would be more useful to inform Czechoslovaks of what the French are doing or intend to do, on the basis of this truly traditional and well-tried friendship of the two peoples, to bring nearer the liberation of the Czechoslovak people. Shockworker Otoc (Votoc?) and his travels to the West are not popular because his sketches are poor. Announcer Vera is very popular among men and women for her lively broadcasts, which are close to the everyday life of Czechoslovaks. The political comments of radio manager Marcel Hirsche are listened to with great interest. I believe it would be helpful if Mr Herben, an excellent publicist with an excellent name, would talk on the Paris radio.

(d) RFE--As I stated above RFE reception is Prague is poor and evaluation is therefore difficult. In general, comments made about VOA broadcasts would apply here.

5. Czechoslovak audiences discern in the comment of foreign broadcasts two lines of completely contradictory thought concerning the prospects for the Communist regime's continued existence in Czechoslovakia--profound pessimism, the impression lately given by Sir Robert Bruce Lockhart, or such demagogic optimism as that demonstrated by the VOA in certain comments it made about the Oatis trial. Czechoslovaks are thoughtful and they attach importance to each small item and each sentence. Almost every broadcast is the subject of long debates and analysis among families and friends. The commentators therefore bear a tremendous responsibility. It is human to want to believe optimistic reports. As a result, a large percentage of Czechoslovak listeners are fully convinced that there will be an early downfall of the present regime in Czechoslovakia. In the past 13 years, they have had only two in which they could believe in the home radio, and they have had to rely on foreign broadcasts. They do much "reading between the lines", dangerous because it leads to fantastic guesses. The prevailing opinion is that the regime will "crash down" within the next six months or at most, within a year (release would then be in mid-1952). Nobody knows how the downfall is to be brought about, but everybody insists it will come and they also insist they heard about it on the foreign radio. They arrived at this conclusion "Reading between the lines" and their disappointment and disillusionment will be all the greater if the Communist regime is not liquidated by that time. The present world situation makes it seem unlikely that the liquidation will take place within that short period. If nothing is done to combat this psychosis, the result will be disbelief in all that the western radio has to say after the year period is up. This should be prevented at any price. The western radio should tell the Czechoslovaks unhesitatingly, honestly and cadidly how the situation stands and what can reasonably be expected. I know that nobody can tell exactly when any event can be expected; and the exigencies of international politics do not allow for completely open speech. But it should be possible to say that the Czech problem is not the foremost world problem, that the Czech liberation is but a part of the operation plan of western diplomacy, that untiring efforts are being made, that the Czech liberation movement in exile is engaged in a positive activity, that liberation will come when the world's problems have been straightened out, that the period will not be as long as the one we have just lived through (1948-51), but that liberation is not imminent. In this connection, the people should be told what plans the West has for the initial political and economic structure of the new liberated country; they should be told that they will freely decide which political parties are to exist and who is to be the leader of the country. In the interests of political preparedness, the Czechoslovak people should also be told they are partly to blame for the current disaster, as a result of something resembling political immaturity or a selfish sense of personal gain (recall the 1946 elections, when the Communist won a large percentage of votes). It is necessary to support the Czechs and Slovaks in their truly democratic beliefs, to educate them in political foresight as an antidote to Communist "political education".

Declassified in Part - Sanitized Copy Approved for Release @ 50-Yr2013/04/29 : CIA-RDP82-00047R000100070007-5

Declassified in Part - Sanitized Copy Approved for Release @ 50-Yr2013/04/29 : CIA-RDP82-00047R000100070007-5

6. In the nature of more specific suggestions, I should say the following:

(a) The daily slandering of the western world, the western press and western politicians by the Czechoslovak press, radio and Communist leaders should be followed up by a ready answer by western radio broadcasts. These matters should be discussed with the greatest emphasis and alertness while they are still fresh in the mind.

(b) The above also applies to daily events in Czechoslovakia. It should be impressed upon the people that the western broadcasts are well informed, that there are problems, the sources of terror, perjury, reasons for dissatisfaction, and so forth.

(c) The VOA should answer once and for all the daily repeated untruths concerning the Negro problem in the US.

(d) A permanent feature entitled "What the Czech Press Forgot to Mention" should be introduced. It should deal with international problems and domestic events kept secret from the Czech people.

(e) Time should be allotted to political education of Czech youth, to counter Communist education while there is still time.

(f) The broadcasts should include reports on the political activity and its results of Czech organizations in exile.

(g) Proof should be presented in periodically repeated broadcasts of the peaceful intentions of the western world as an answer to Communist assertions about alleged war preparations and warmongers in the West.

(h) Czech listeners should be kept informed of the damage caused by the Communist policy in production, trade, foreign trade and agriculture.

(i) Women listeners should be told of the position of women in the West to counter Communist tales of the "new equality of women."

(j) Lectures should be given comparing the buying power of the old Czech crown and of the present value of the crown with regard to the present earning power of workers in Czechoslovakia.

-end-

Declassified in Part - Sanitized Copy Approved for Release @ 50-Yr2013/04/29 : CIA-RDP82-00047R000100070007-5